

Dryden Regional Health Centre

Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026



Empowered
Progressive
Innovative

Care

Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer

In the spring of 2022, DRHC began a strategic planning process. As our 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, “Care that Works” comes to an end, it is time to reflect on where we need to be going as an organization.

The last several years have been like no other. We are proud of how DRHC demonstrated resilience, perseverance and flexibility when faced with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through it all, our focus was to be here, serving our community and patients.

As we look forward, we recognize that we need to accelerate our efforts. The many pressures of operating a rural community health centre are not likely to ease as workforce, economic and social challenges continue to grow. But DRHC will continue to be here for you.

DRHC commits to doing all that we can internally to continue to provide excellence in rural health care. We will evolve our programs and services and ensure that we are using our resources as effectively as possible. We will be here for our staff, ensuring they are equipped and supported to provide their best patient care every day.

We also know that external solutions are needed to address many of the pressures that are outside our direct control but that impact our ability to provide care to our community. DRHC commits to acting as a catalyst to accelerate change. We can serve our patients better by working together with our partners and being a part of new solutions in our community and region.

We are pleased to share DRHC’s strategic plan for 2023-2026, and it is our privilege to continue to be here serving you.

Brock Moore-Bunney, Board Chair

Doreen Armstrong-Ross, Chief Executive Officer

Who Are We?

Over the last five years, we have been focused on providing “Care that Works” by enhancing programs that we have available for our patients, by growing our people, and building stronger partnerships.

Looking to the future, and the challenges ahead and the constantly evolving nature of the healthcare system, DRHC determined that it was important to revisit our mission and vision statements to solidify who we are and what we strive to do, while maintaining our five core values.

OUR MISSION: this is our purpose; the reason that our organization exists and what we aspire to be.

We are an innovative rural health centre that exists to enhance the health of the patients and communities we serve.

OUR VISION: this is what we strive to be; by working towards our strategic pillars and priorities we are working towards achieving this goal to the benefit of our patients and communities.

To be recognized as an innovative centre of excellence in rural healthcare.

OUR VALUES: these are the behaviours and principles that guide what we say, think, and do; these standards are both core to everything we do, and aspirational to everything we want to be.

	Organizational Standards how Our Values guide our decisions, actions, and directions as an organization	Standards of Behaviour how Our Values guide how we interact as individuals with patients, families, and one another
Compassion	<i>“We will commit to listening and understanding with a desire to improve”</i>	<i>“I will commit to understanding an individual’s circumstances with a desire to help”</i>
Humility	<i>“We will listen and learn from our communities and staff with an open heart and mind”</i>	<i>“I will have a modest opinion of my own importance; not believing I am superior to others”</i>
Accountability	<i>“We will manage our resources to ensure we can serve the communities that rely on us.”</i>	<i>“I will take ownership and responsibility for my own actions and decisions.”</i>
Respect	<i>“We will create an environment that is safe and inclusive for everyone”</i>	<i>“I will have regard for the feelings, wishes, and rights of others”</i>
Integrity	<i>“We will deliver excellence with every encounter”</i>	<i>“I will be honest, fair, and do the right thing, even when no one is looking”</i>

How Did We Develop this Strategic Plan:

To develop this strategic plan, we needed to consider several things:

- Where we are now as an organization;
- The challenges and opportunities our organization will face in the next several years that will impact how we operate;
- What we are expected to do and deliver as an organization.

To better understand factors, we gathered information from multiple sources, including:

- completing an analysis of the population we serve to better understand how people are currently accessing and using health care services;
- completed an analysis of anticipated demographic changes over the next 10 to 20 years, and the impact that will have on health services;
- considered DRHC's current performance as an organization;
- reviewed government and regional health services strategies;
- held interviews and focus groups with DRHC's leaders, regional leaders and partners to collect their thoughts and opinions on what is needed;
- provided an online survey so that our staff and the public could weigh-in on their experience and what they think will be most important.

We synthesized these key learnings to understand the implications for DRHC. The Senior Leadership Team and Board then participated in a facilitated process to consider these influences on DRHC and to develop priorities for the next three years. What is presented in this document is a summary of extensive consideration.

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this process.

Current Status

Ontario is just coming through the COVID-19 pandemic. This required ongoing and significant shifts in operations to keep staff and patients safe while we continued to provide quality services. DRHC is proud of our resilience and commitment: through this extremely difficult time, we never failed to be here for our community.

Together with our physicians and partners, we have managed to expand services to better meet the needs of our community. We have increased mental health services and have grown our partnerships with primary care. We continue to offer a full scope of community health services, but now also bring more specialized acute hospital services such as elective surgery and chemotherapy, closer to home.

We are valued as a critical health care resource by the community that we serve.

SWOT Analysis

Through engagement with internal (staff, physician, and volunteers) and external (patients and families, community leaders, regional healthcare partners), we have developed a summary of our current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).

STRENGTHS

- Quality care: we are accredited with exemplary status and were recently recognized as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario.
- Our integrated care model ensures end-to-end services for several patient groups.
- We have developed innovative models for service that brings care closer to home and allows us to invest in enhanced services.
- We have made many investments in our people, and have been recognized with a “Great Employer, Healthy Workplace” award.
- We have strong partnerships with other hospitals and providers and are participating in regional strategies to enhance technology and access to care.

WEAKNESSES

- Despite innovative recruitment strategies, having enough qualified staff and physicians to provide care is always a challenge.
- Providing and receiving care in the Emergency Department is getting harder as demand grows and patient needs become more complicated. There are growing concerns about violence even though we have been working to improve safety & security.
- About 30% of our beds are used for people who could receive care elsewhere if other services existed.
- We are working to better understand what our indigenous users need to feel cared for at DRHC.
- Maintaining our balanced financial position is getting harder given increasing inflation and operating costs.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Although we have always had a strong performance culture at DRHC, our staff report that they feel pressure at work and it is becoming more difficult to do their jobs.
- Our patients are also beginning to experience the pressure that the hospital is under: they note increasing wait times and report “less personal” care.
- We need to do more for the Indigenous Community to feel safe and welcome at DRHC.
- Social challenges, such as mental health, addictions and homelessness, are increasing in our community. Strategies to address these issues are beginning to be implemented, but DRHC should anticipate more patients with these specialized needs over the short term. There is a need to do more to address safety and security to care for patients with these types of challenges.
- Our elective surgery program is considered highly innovative and regionally important: there is interest in exploring other ways to expand access to services and potentially increase revenues.
- Our partners respect our expertise and would like to see us be even more active in participating and leading local, regional and provincial initiatives.
- Given Ontario’s financial position, we would be naïve to anticipate significant increases in funding provided to operate programs and service over the next several years.

THREATS

- Data tells us that our population is aging, and its health needs are becoming more complex. There will soon be more demand for hospital services than we are resourced to deliver.
- Our city and area are behind much of Ontario in availability of community-based services. We should anticipate that our emergency department will continue to be a “safety net” and the percentage of our beds used for alternate level of care patients may increase until additional services are established outside of hospital.
- There is a global staffing crisis. We are going to have to be even more innovative to attract and retain talent.
- Ontario is introducing new models of service delivery. It will be important for DRHC to be involved as roles, processes and accountabilities are being clarified in our region.
- Our physical buildings and technology is aging. Outdated infrastructure is a risk as it limits what we can deliver and our ability to expand service.

Guiding Principles

Using the information we learned throughout this process, and looking at our Mission, Vision, and Values, we developed six Guiding Principles as the base for the pillars and priorities of the Strategic Plan:

FOCUS	We must ensure a sustainable future by understanding our mandate, advancing partnerships and using best practices to guide how we are using our valuable and limited resources.
PROTECT OUR REPUTATION	We must maintain our standing as a trusted health resource in our community to be a place where people want to work and come to for care.
INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE	We must accelerate our best practices so our people can care, work, grow, and thrive and be an exceptional place for existing and new staff.
ACCELERATE INNOVATION	We need to continue to be bold, resilient, to think differently and to try new things in order to prosper.
LEAD	We need strong leadership to help our communities and system find solutions to increasingly difficult challenges, advancing partnerships and to advocate for positive system change.
CONTINUE TO MODERNIZE	We must continue to modernize our physical spaces and systems.

In order to deliver on our mission, we need to keep all of this in mind when determining how we focus our energy and resources to ensure that we are able to support our patients, our people, and our partners.

DRHC's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan identifies three pillars that will help us to focus on providing the high-quality healthcare services that our communities need and deserve:

- **Be a Great Place to Work:** Our people are our most valuable resource; we need maintain an environment that allows them to provide the exceptional care that patients and their families deserve.
- **Ensure Strong Foundations:** Delivering high quality healthcare services requires utilizing our valuable but limited resources efficiently to ensure that we are prepared to provide services that fit the unique needs of the communities that rely on us.
- **Lead New Solutions:** With the many challenges facing our community and the healthcare system as a whole, innovative new approaches are required to meet the needs of patients now and into the future. DRHC needs to utilize our experience and expertise to develop programs and services in collaboration with local, regional, and provincial partners to improve outcomes across the continuum of care.

PILLAR: Be a Great Place to Work

“Empowering Exceptional People to Provide Exceptional Care”

Our people – DRHC staff, professional staff, physicians and volunteers- are our greatest asset. We need enough staff, with the right kinds of skills, who are highly engaged and energized to continue to offer our patients the type and scope of quality service DRHC wants to provide.

DRHC has always had strong HR strategies that have enabled us to be creative in attracting and retaining the best people. Now more than ever we need to be here for the staff and physicians we have invested in, ensuring they feel appreciated and are enabled to give their best every day. We know that if we are an exceptional place to work, DRHC will be successful at retaining our staff and at attracting new talent, even in this very competitive labour market.

PRIORITY: Make Day-to-Day Work More Fulfilling

- Focus on adopting evidence-based practices, strategies, and behaviours that we know will have positive impacts on staff, performance, fulfillment, and engagement.
- Use innovative best practices so our people can care, work, grow, and thrive, and be an exceptional place for existing and new staff to deliver quality patient care.

PRIORITY: Be a Safe Place for Everyone

- Provide our people with access to the leadership, resources, and supports needed to thrive in a physically and emotionally safe environment;
- Implement and provide training that allow us to actively demonstrate our commitment to cultural diversity, anti-racism and inclusion in our daily work.

Measures of Success: Over the short-term, these strategies will have a positive impact on staff engagement scores and retention. Longer term we will see reduced vacancies, increased ability to staff/operate programs and services, and improved patient satisfaction scores.

Key Indicators: *vacancy rate, education hours for staff, vacation hours (unused), and staff engagement scores.*

PILLAR: Ensure Strong Foundations

“Progressive Care for Changing Times”

We have learned a lot from the pandemic and know that stability is needed to get through difficult times. In order to continue to offer high quality services to our community, DRHC needs to ensure it is operating with strong foundations.

This means optimizing our financial resources, ensuring we are accessing funding effectively, and using the funds we have in the best way we can.

It also means ensuring strong service delivery foundations: knowing we are set up to deliver best quality services to our patients. We also need to ensure that our actions continue to be aligned with our core values, ensuring we demonstrate our respect and understanding for the unique needs of the populations that rely on us.

PRIORITY: Optimize Funding

- Ensure we are optimizing how we access funding to support our work
- Identify and implement innovative ways to generate/increase our revenues
- Execute on strategies that will create clinical and/or operational efficiencies, so that we can do more with the resources that we have.

PRIORITY: Adaptive Core Services

- Act on opportunities to improve service delivery approaches to ensure we are maximizing our use of resources and providing care aligned with best practice.
- Plan for and continue to invest in making capital upgrades that will enhance our ability to deliver quality services
- Ensure effective emergency planning

PRIORITY: Commit to the process of Truth and Reconciliation

- Invest to ensure our actions at DRHC promote culturally safe experiences and advance health equity for Indigenous peoples

PRIORITY: Demonstrate our Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Develop mechanisms for engaging the voices of groups we may not have heard from in the past.

Measures of Success: We will be able to maintain a positive financial position and maintain and/or expand service scope. We will have delivery model improvements and will develop and begin to action Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategies that have been co-developed with patients and their families to reflect their needs.

Key Indicators: *gross margin, staff survey scores related to EDI, patient experience survey results related to respect (more specific survey questions related to EDI to be developed).*

PILLAR: Lead New Solutions

“Innovative Care through Collaboration”

It is clear that new solutions are needed to address the many pressures our community and our hospital is facing. Our ability to continue to serve our patients depends greatly on decisions being made outside our walls.

DRHC needs to take an active role in determining the future as the system changes and new ways of serving patients are being developed in our community. We need to ensure there is clarity about what DRHC will provide as it works together with others in new ways. We commit to being a catalyst for change.

We will dedicate resources and share our experience and expertise, providing leadership in pursuit of a system that provides better access to the types of care our communities needs.

PRIORITY: Invest in leadership and be leaders for positive change

- Create short- to medium-term development plans for key leaders with the goal of increasing DRHC’s capacity and competency to lead internal and system change;
- Support and enable DRHC leaders to actively advocate for and support the development and improvement of community-based services that will improve the health of our communities;
- Build on our capacity and capabilities of leader roles at DRHC to ensure external accountabilities are assigned, understood, and accounted for.

PRIORITY: Build partnerships and collaboration for better health outcomes

- Ensure a sustainable future by understanding our mandate, advancing partnerships, and using best practices to guide how we are using our valuable and limited resources;
- Provide strong leadership to help our communities and system find solutions to increasingly difficult challenges, advance partnerships, and advocate for positive system change.

Measures of Success: As a system, and as a hospital, we will be positioned for a more sustainable future: New solutions will be identified; roles will be clarified; the capacity to provide services outside the health centre (thus reducing future demand for DRHC resources) will increase. Our leaders will expand their leadership competence and demonstrate greater influence and impact.

Key Indicators: *hospitalization rate for conditions best treated by ambulatory care, Electronic Medical Record Adoption Model (EMRAM) implementation progress*

What Happens Next?

DRHC's Strategic Plan for 2023 -2026, ***Empowered, Progressive, Innovative Care*** has been endorsed by the Board of Directors.

We have committed to three strategic pillars, and a number of strategic priorities that make up the work of each pillar.

Now implementation work begins:

- Develop a plan that will articulate the outcomes that will be achieved over the next 3 years.
- Work plans and timelines will be established for each strategic priority. Detailed annual plans will be developed.
- Determine who will be accountable for ensuring each objective is achieved.
- Consider how the work will be funded and resourced.
- We will develop measures to demonstrate the progress that is being made toward each strategic objective.
- If things change, we will adjust our plan when appropriate.

We commit to communicating the plan and the progress on our strategy:

- We need our community, staff and partners to understand what we are focusing on and why.
- We need our people to understand how they fit in and how their work supports the strategy, mission, vision, and values.
- We will be transparent about the progress we are making by reporting regularly to the Board, our people, and the community.

